

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-14. (Cancelled)

15. (Previously Presented) A device for positioning a plate [2] comprising one or more samples on an observation or analysis device comprising an observation or analysis lens [3] of at least part of a sample along an observation axis from an observation face [2b] of the plate [2] and a chassis [11] having a support assembly [20] for the plate [2], wherein this support assembly [20] comprises:

- a first movable frame [21] sliding in a plane perpendicular to the observation axis;
- a second movable frame [22] supported by the first frame [21] sliding in said plane perpendicular to the observation axis, the first and second frames [21 and 22] being movable in a direction perpendicular to the direction in which other frame moves,
- a third frame [23] supported by the second frame [22] by means [30] used to maintain the third frame [23] blocked in the plane perpendicular to the observation axis, while leaving the third frame [23] free to move essentially along the observation axis, said third frame [23] presenting means [31 and 33] to immobilise the plate [2], and
- means [40] for ensuring a constant distance between the lens [3] and the observation face [2b] of the plate [2].

16. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein it comprises means (35a, 35b; 36a, 36b) used to immobilise the third frame [23] in the vertical position for placing the analysis plate [2].

Claims 17. (Cancelled)

18. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to maintain the third frame [23] comprise at least one thin spring plate [30a, 30b] forming a pivot, preferably located in the observation plane, said spring plate [30a, 30b] being connected respectively to the second [22] and third frame [23].

19. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to maintain the third frame [23] comprise a hinge pin located between the second and third frames [22, 23] preferably extending perpendicular to the motion direction of the second frame [22] and at least one torsional spring located between said second and third frames [22, 23].

20. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to immobilise the plate [2] are comprised by supporting shoes [31] arranged around the inner periphery of the third frame [23] and a cam [33] mounted on the third frame [23] which can be pivoted between a retracted position and a projecting position inside the third frame [23] so as to immobilise the plate [2].

21. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to immobilise the plate [2] are comprised by supporting shoes [31] arranged around the inner periphery of the third frame [23] and a cam [33] mounted on the third frame [23] which can be pivoted between a retracted position and a projecting position inside the third frame [23] so as to immobilise the plate [2] and wherein said cam comprises a screw whose head or tip can rest on the base of the plate.

22. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to maintain the plate [2] in the third frame [23] are comprised by supporting shoes [31] arranged around the inner periphery of the third frame [23] and a cam [33] mounted on the third frame [23] which can be pivoted between a retracted position and a projecting position inside the third frame [23] so as to immobilise the plate [2] and wherein part of the said shoes comprises a recess intended for taking the base of the plate.

23. (Currently Amended) A device according to claim 15, wherein the means used to ~~maintain~~immobilise the third frame are comprised by two opposing limit stops [35a and 35b], each mounted on one side of the first frame [21] extending parallel to the motion direction of the second frame [22] and by two opposing ties [36a and 36b] each fixed perpendicular to one side of the third frame [23] extending parallel to said direction, with each limit stop [35a, 35b] comprising an inclined face designed to work in

conjunction with the free end of the corresponding tie [36a/36b] when the second and third frames [22 and 23] move in this direction.

24. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein it includes means [40] of controlling the vertical position of the observation face [2b] of the plate [2] with respect to the observation lens [3] and wherein said means of control are comprised by a strut [40] fixed with respect to the observation lens [3] and having a bearing area of the observation face [2b] of the plate [2].

Claim 25. (Cancelled)

26. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 15, wherein the motions of the first and second frames [21 and 22] are motorised.

27. (Previously Presented) A sample observation or analysis device, wherein it comprises a positioning device for a plate [2], said positioning device comprising one or more samples on an observation or analysis device comprising an observation or analysis lens [3] of at least part of a sample along an observation axis from an observation face [2b] of the plate [2] and a chassis [11] having a support assembly [20] for the plate [2], wherein this support assembly [20] comprises:

- a first movable frame [21] sliding in a plane perpendicular to the observation axis;

- a second movable frame [22] supported by the first frame [21] sliding in said plane perpendicular to the observation axis, the first and second frames [21 and 22] being movable in a direction perpendicular to the direction in which other frame moves,

- a third frame [23] supported by the second frame [22] by means [30] used to maintain the third frame [23] blocked in the plane perpendicular to the observation axis, while leaving the third frame [23] free to move essentially along the observation axis, said third frame [23] presenting means [31 and 33] to immobilise the plate [2], - means [40] for ensuring a constant distance between the lens [3] and the observation face [2b] of the plate [2].and

- the sample observation or analysis device further comprises a light source for at least part of a sample and image acquisition means.

28. (Previously Presented) A device according to claim 27, wherein the light source is a lamp, a laser or an array of electroluminescent diodes.